



10 January 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Technical Intelligence Collection and the NRO

1. There are two matters on which I believe you should have this brief expression of my views before the meeting planned with Mr. Gilpatrick on 11 January. The first of these is a proposal that certain activities of the Agency should be grouped together under a Deputy for Scientific and Technical Intelligence Collection. The second has to do with the locus and mode of operation of the National Reconnaissance Office.

2. On the first of these matters I will here simply set down my conclusions I have reached after rather careful consideration without taking the space to present the arguments pro and con that have led me to these conclusions.

Second. It would, on the whole, be a backward step, though not infeasible to place the Technical Services Division under the responsibility of any officer other than the DD/P. The most serious problems of research and development within this Agency (and I suspect in others) have to do with the relationship between scientists, technicians, and developers on the one hand and operators on the other. Our greatest successes with new technicians have occurred in situations in which there was closely unified control over development and operational use.

Third. I would think it unwise to place the Assistant Director/Scientific Intelligence under any superior officer other than the DD/I.

Stated affirmatively, and after making these exclusions, the new Deputy Director should be responsible for those activities of DPD that are concerned with advanced reconnaissance projects and perhaps for the Photograph Interpretation Center.

NRO review(s) completed.

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3. It is not clear just how much would be accomplished by such a move. There is no doubt that if the Agency continues to have primary responsibility for OXCART and certain defined responsibilities with respect to satellite reconnaissance programs, these would benefit from the availability of a senior officer in the Agency able to give them full attention. Essentially, his function would be that which I exercised prior to 1958. I would suggest that he would need only a small staff and could well be designated an Assistant to the Director for Special Projects.

4. With respect to the National Reconnaissance Office, I have noted the views you expressed to Messrs. Gilpatrick and Charyk as summarized in your Memorandum for the Record of 3 January. On this matter, again, I will simply summarize certain views without supporting justification.

First. If there is to be a National Reconnaissance Office with a single head, he must have the responsibility and authority (subject, of course, to his superiors) for major systems decisions in the development phase and for major operational decisions in the operational phase. Obviously, he would make such decisions within the constraints imposed in the form of budgetary limitations, intelligence requirements (which would emanate from the USIB), and national policy.

Second. It will be difficult under the most favorable circumstances for an individual placed in either the Agency or the Department of Defense to exercise this authority over resources controlled by the other of the two partner agencies

Third. Other than in the OXCART program, all the funds and the vast preponderance of resources in the form of technical personnel, operational personnel, and facilities belong to the Department of Defense. The above difficulty would be maximized in a situation in which an officer of the Agency was expected to exercise control over those resources.

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Fourth. Accordingly, by far the easiest way to create a unified National Reconnaissance Office would be to place its Director in the Department of Defense and to limit the Agency's role in reconnaissance programs to the performance of certain specified functions, notably procurement and assistance with problems of security and cover, under his direction. This would not, of course, dilute the USIB's responsibility for requirements and need involve no change in the status of the Photographic Interpretation Center.

5. There are, I think, two other possible arrangements that would be consistent with good management. One would be to abandon the notion of a National Reconnaissance Office and leave the responsibility for OXCART with the Agency and responsibility for all satellite programs with the Department of Defense. Each agency could then seek such support as it required from the other. The other solution would be to make the National Reconnaissance Office into a truly joint project organization headed by a director responsible to both the DCI and the Secretary of Defense. Under this conception, all the resources required for the conduct of national reconnaissance programs should be assigned by the two parent agencies to the National Reconnaissance Office and should be directly controlled by the National Reconnaissance Office. Its Table of Organization should include personnel in Washington, in project offices at contractor's plants, and in the operational control center at Sunnyvale that are directly engaged in the development and operation of reconnaissance systems. Its budget should cover the full costs of these programs. It should be empowered to execute contracts and carry out procurement under the authority of the Secretary of Defense for all overt activities and under that of the DCI where security so required.

6. In conclusion I might say that I regard this last solution as the best. It would not, of course, represent a drastically different arrangement from that which would result from simply placing the National Reconnaissance Office within the Department of Defense. It would require more surgery than the latter arrangement. On the other hand, it would have the great advantage that the provision for joint control by the DCI and the Secretary of Defense would serve as a protection against the absorption of these functions by the military services. Hopefully, the opportunity for secure and technically venturesome development could be maintained.

/s/
RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.
Deputy Director
(Plans)

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Agreement Between
Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence
on
Responsibilities of the National Reconnaissance Office (TS)

Definitions:

NRO - National Reconnaissance Office

NRP - National Reconnaissance Program, to consist of all overt and covert satellite and overflight projects for intelligence, geodesy and mapping photography and electronic signal collection.

DNRO - Director, National Reconnaissance Office

Policy:

The following plan outlines basic policy for the establishment of functions and responsibilities within the National Reconnaissance Office to insure that the particular talents, experience and capabilities within the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency are fully and most effectively utilized in the establishment, management and conduct of the National Reconnaissance Program. The DNRO will be designated by the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, and will be responsible directly to them for the management and conduct of the NRP.

1. Requirements and Priorities:

The NRO will be directly responsive to, and only to, the photographic and electronic signal (SIGINT) collection requirements

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and priorities established by the United States Intelligence Board and will develop the over-all reconnaissance program to satisfy these requirements.

2. Management:

a. The technical management responsibility for all the NRP is assigned to the DNRO. Under this over-all responsibility for NRP, DNRO will utilize existing resources in the following manner:

(1) CIA will be the Executive Agent for DNRO for those covert projects already under its management and such additional covert projects as are assigned to it by the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence.

(2) To provide for full use of available capabilities and resources, and to provide for interface with data exploitation equipment development by agencies outside the NRO, personnel of Army, Navy, Air Force, and CIA, will be assigned, on a full-time basis, to appropriate positions within the NRO under the DNRO.

(3) A firm liaison channel between the NRO and the NSA will be established as an adjunct to the technical management structure of signal collection projects, and the conduct of such projects carried out in accordance with the exploitation responsibilities of the NSA.

(4) Planning will encompass maximum utilization of the technical and operational resources of the DOD, the Army, Navy, Air Force, NSA, and the CIA to support all collection programs, including, but not limited to, electronic signal and photographic collection programs.

b. Financial Management:

(1) The DNRO will be responsible for funding the NRP. DOD funds will be allocated on an individual project basis

CIA will be responsible for funding covert projects for which it has management responsibility under paragraph 2. a. (1) above.

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(2) DNRO will have responsibility for all NRP contracts in accordance with the assignment of technical management responsibility in paragraph 2. a. Consistent with paragraph 2. a. (1), CIA will be the Executive Agent of the DNRO, responsible for administering procurement and contracting for covert projects for which it is assigned responsibility under paragraph 2. a. (1), and for covert contracting necessary for the support of overt projects.

3. Security:

In accordance with the basic responsibility of the Director of Central Intelligence for protection of intelligence sources and methods, CIA will establish security policy for the NRP, including provision for a uniform system of security control and appropriate delegations of security responsibility.

4. Operations:

a. Scheduling: The mission schedule for all NRP efforts will be the sole responsibility of DNRO, subject to coordination with CIA on covert projects for which it is Executive Agent and the obtaining of appropriate clearances where required from higher authority. Operational control for individual projects under the NRP will be assigned to the DOD or to the CIA by the DNRO in accordance with policy guidance from the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. DNRO will be responsible to assure that mission planning will make full use of all intelligence available in the community.

b. Format: The DNRO will be responsible for the format of the collected NRP product as follows:

(1) Photographic format will include the initial chemical processing, titling, production and delivery to the users as specified by the USIB.

(2) Electronic signal data format will include the decommutation, conversion, technical correction and reconstruction of the collected signal data to yield a usable collection product. DNRO will deliver the collection product in proper format together with associated data necessary for exploitation, to the NSA or other user as specified by the USIB.

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c. Engineering Analysis: The DNRO will be responsible for engineering analysis of all collection systems to correct the problems that exist on the operating system as well as to provide information for new systems. In connection with covert projects for which CIA is Executive Agent, this responsibility will be carried out under the supervision of CIA.

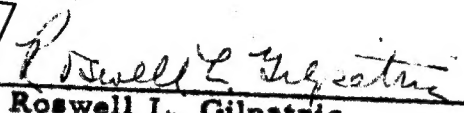
5. The DNRO is responsible for advanced plans (post CY-1962) in support of the NRP. In view of the DCI's major responsibility to the NSC for all intelligence programs, all NRO advanced planning will be coordinated with CIA.

6. Public releases of information will be the responsibility of the DNRO subject to the security guidance of CIA.

7. The Deputy Director (Research), CIA, will be responsible for seeing that the participation of CIA in this Agreement is carried out.

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John A. McCone
Director of Central Intelligence


Roswell L. Gilpatric
Deputy Secretary of Defense

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